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Factors Affecting the Twinning Rate

Fraternal twins tend to run in families.

Most identical twins happen “by chance” and can happen to anyone. However, some new research has shown a “male factor” that may contribute to identical twinning.

Many people believe that twins “skip a generation.” Twinning is passed on as a genetic trait and appears in the women only. If you are a female and your mother had fraternal twins, you would have an increased chance of having fraternal twins yourself. Your brothers would not have an increased chance of having fraternal twins themselves, but they may pass the genetic trait on to their daughters, who would then have an increased chance of having twins. This makes it appear that twins skip a generation.

It is well known that fertility treatments can cause multiple births. This affects mainly the rate of fraternal, or dizygotic, twins. Fertility methods use many different types of drugs and treatments. Most of them rely on stimulating ovulation with hormones or, more recently, inserting fertilized eggs into the mother's uterus (womb). Fertility treatments were not thought to cause identical or monozygotic twins, however new reports show an increase in the identical twinning rate, especially with in-vitro fertilization (IVF).

There are also many other factors that increase the rate of fraternal births. They include social habits, maternal age, number of pregnancies, geographic location, seasons, and nutrition.



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CONNECTING + SUPPORTING MULTIPLE BIRTH FAMILIES

(Also known as the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs)